REMARKS

The claims have been amended to further distinguish the claimed invention from the cited reference, although it is maintained that the claims as originally presented were patentably distinct. These amended claims, however, clarify the teachings of the present invention as to timing and as to result. It is respectfully requested that the pending claims, as amended, be reconsidered.

1. Randomness – In the originally presented independent claims 1 and 17, the hint is "randomly displayed in the casino game." Hence, not every play of a "game round" (claim 1) or "for a casino game" (claim 17) has the hint of the present invention displayed. The "adjusted pay tables" of Wood must be available to be displayed in every Wood game to maintain his player expectation calculations as extensively set forth throughout the Wood patent. The Wood approach is to forcefully equilibrate different player skill levels, via an adjusted pay table that accommodates inferior styles of play. This equilibration only occurs if the adjusted pay tables are utilized on each hand. The Applicant thus respectfully disagrees with the Examiner that it is obvious to one skilled in the art to modify Wood to provide randomness. Wood certainly provides no suggestions or inferences to do. For this reason alone, independent claims 1 and 17 and their corresponding dependent claims are patentably distinct.

2. Hint – Each independent claim 1 and 17 as originally presented used the term "hint" to "provide information" to "the player." Claims 1 and 17 have been amended to include "the player" to clarify the claim language. The Applicant respectfully disagrees that his "hint" is Wood's "adjusted pay table." Applicant's hint is utilized to improve a player's instantaneous expectation, but only if the player makes use of the hint as provided. Wood's adjusted pay table always improves a sub-optimal player's instantaneous expectation; there is no option for the player to make use or not make use of any hint.

Wood does not provide any "hint" in the adjusted pay table, but rather a factual statement and modified odds in response to the player's previous input of which cards to discard (column 10, lines 20-65). Wood calculates the adjusted award values for all possible discard selections made by the player (column 10, lines 22-28) and then, in response to the player's input, one pay table of 32 possible pay tables is displayed (column 8, line 15).

On page 11, line 8, *et seq.*, of the specification, the term "hint" is defined "to contain information for the player to increase the instantaneous expected value for the game round so that the player chooses properly or more properly from the possible inputs." Hence, the player in the claimed inventions of claim 1 and claim 17 is provided with this information so that the player has a choice to utilize the hint or not when the player next provides the inputs. The player utilizing a hint has a higher expected return compared to a player that does not use the hint.

It is respectfully maintained that Wood's adjusted pay table does not proactively suggest to the player a proper choice. The adjusted pay table of Wood does not indicate or suggest, via a hint, a proper input for a player to make. Indeed, Wood's approach is to equilibrate all players regardless of input! Note the Wood example, at column 20, lines 25-30, no hints were given in either pay table presentation such as a hint in the first default pay table such as: "you may want to discard only one card" or in the second adjusted pay table: "oops, you may want to go back." In the Wood example the player is dealt two pair and then discards one pair. Wood does not have the claimed "hint" in the factual information of an adjusted pay table, and for this reason alone, claims 1 and 17 and their corresponding dependent claims are patentably distinct.

3. Presenting the Hint Before Player Selects at least one Input from a Plurality of Inputs – Wood discloses two types of player input: selecting the discard cards and pushing the deal button. The first time the player selects the discard cards in game play, Wood provides only the default pay table to the player. In response to the player's discard card input selection, the Wood poker game then displays the adjusted pay table corresponding to the player's selection. This teaching of Wood has no relevance to the claimed invention.

The Wood player now has a choice to press the deal button or to re-select discard cards. When the player presses the deal button, play of the poker game is conventional and any resulting payout is based on the pay outs in the adjusted pay table (column 11, lines 11-31). Again, the pressing of the deal button, after viewing of the adjusted pay table, has no relevance to the claimed invention as the pay table has no hint and only one deal button is pushed (no choice among a plurality of inputs is provided).

Rather than press the deal button, the Wood player can choose to select a new set of discard cards which would then result in the display of a new adjusted pay table (column 11, lines 31-68). In making this choice, there is nothing in the displayed adjusted pay table (corresponding to the player's immediate prior selection of discard cards) to hint how the player can increase his/her instantaneous value with a new discard selection. Wood only displays the pay table for that prior selection. By pressing new discard cards, a new adjusted pay table is then displayed. Though the player can now (if the player remembers the prior adjusted pay table) decide which adjusted pay table provides better awards, this information is not sufficient to determine which strategy affords a better player expectation. For to determine the player expectation, the player would also need to calculate the relative probabilities of drawing to each of the final hand outcomes. The goal of Wood is to, through an pay table manipulation process, bump up players to be close to the "optimal player." There is nothing in Wood that discloses, suggests, or infers to a Wood player which discard cards to optimally select, except possibly to cycle through all possible discard combinations until finding one in which the adjusted pay table is identical to the original, perhaps implying this is the best strategy. But even then, the player doesn't know if the adjusted pay tables ever-so-slightly improve the player's return. Again, to determine this would require a calculation of all ensuing outcomes associated with each of the (in principle) 32 strategies for holding/discarding, and weighing by the appropriate adjusted pay table. To summarize, no hints are provided in Wood. Wood teaches away from the present invention in that all players are forced into virtually the same expectation regardless of player choice! This is very different than the present invention which allows, even encourages, players to make better choices by use of hints.

Originally presented claim 1 claimed this order of displaying the hint before receiving the at least one input from a plurality of inputs and claim 17 has been amended to recite this order. For this reason alone, independent 1 and independent claim 17 are patentably distinct as well as their corresponding dependent claims. However, claims 1 and 17 have been further amended to make this clear.

4. Affecting the Instantaneous Value – Wood adjusts the payout values for a reason. Wood's player expected value over the long term **is the same** for the player who does not optimally play and for the player who evaluates the adjusted pay tables and optimally pays (column 23, lines 64-67). That is, the awards are adjusted to make this happen. In Wood's example at column 20, lines 25-30, the player is dealt two pair and was entitled to receive 16 coins as the default pay table shows (column 23, line 50). The player, non-optimally, decides to discard one of the pairs and the third card (column 20, lines 64-66). A new adjusted pay table now shows the award for two pairs to be 25 coins, but now the odds of the player obtaining another pair are much greater. This is how Woods achieves his goal of maintaining a constant

house advantage. The claimed present invention allows players who follow such hints to have a higher expected value (see the discussion at page 16 , lines 1-16) than players who don't follow the hints. This does not occur in Wood. Woods is an entirely different approach than claimed herein.

With respect to the dependent claims, it is respectfully maintained that when each dependent claim is read with its corresponding independent claim, for the reasons set forth above, they are patentably distinct.

Dependent claims 2-4 are directed to knowledge-based casino games and it is respectfully maintained that poker is not a knowledge-base casino game. Claim 2 has been amended to recite "comprising trivia questions."

There is no suggestion or inference in Wood of the adjusted pay table displaying information to the player "eliminating one input of the plurality of possible inputs as being incorrect" as claimed in claim 5 or that some of the inputs are more correct as found in claim 6.

Wood displays a card hand as found in claim 7 (but when 7 is incorporated into claim 1, claim 7 is patentably distinct), but Wood does not suggest or infer providing information on how to play the hand to win as found in claim 8.

Claims 10 to 11 and 20 -21 set forth dependent features not found in Wood. These features provide additional reasons for patentability.

Claims 13 and 23 dynamically determines the hint from the decision-making round. Wood generates each adjusted pay table based on the player's prior input. When claim 13 (23) is read into claim 1 (17), for the reasons cited above, it is patentably distinct over Wood.

While Wood discusses a "progressive" embodiment at the cited column 6, lines 48-55, a bonus game embodiment is not found. There is no discussion in Wood of the Internet. Even so, when claims 14, 15 and 16 are read with independent claim 1 as a whole there are patentably distinct.

Claim 18 is cancelled as the randomness of the hint is already recited in claim 17.

There is no "predetermined condition" feature, "preventing display of the hint", and providing "information that the received input was wrong" in Wood and claims 19, 22, and 24 add further patentability to claim 17 when read as a whole.

Wood does not displayed a plurality of adjusted pay tables to the player wherein the player can select one so the display of a plurality of hints to the player as found in claim 26 is patentably distinct.

Should you have any questions regarding the above, please feel free to give the below-listed attorney a call. If additional fees are required, please debit our Deposit Account No. 04-1414.

Respectfully submitted,

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